

self-identity. And hence it is that James's American philistines, puritans, and dilettantes are incapable of positive self-transformation.

James's positive heroes and heroines, on the contrary, acquire the capacity for exercising their generic American traits of conscience by placing it in the extensive possibility of growth under European experience. Human integrity, self-sacrifice, resourceful openness of mind, heart and spirit, and cultural resilience, are all brought out under the impact of their complex self-recognition.

European culture, on the contrary, is limited by its own virtues and by their antinomian possibilities. Tradition in Europe too had assumed a unilateral simplicity which was an obstacle to comprehensive human refinement. If America had come to view the vitalities of life as commodities of convenience, Europe had come to view them as no more than ritual embellishments of a life emptied of the quickening substance of moral conscience. If America enviously looked upon objects of art as hoardable possessions, Europe in its worst manifestations could regard them as inglorious fetishes of a devitalized antiquity. Social manners were missing in American society as unfortunately as Europe's other stock-piled emblems of high civilisation, such as aristocracy, manors, country houses, palaces, castles, and ivied ruins and wrecked gentlemen. European manners in isolation from the living reality of the historical present would simply render life inactive under encrusted veneer of cultural preciousness. The crying need of European society and European character was that it should re-establish its lost connections with reality by meeting American morals half way. The European suitors in the novels of Henry James reveal the strength and the weakness inherent in a culture of mere manners, when they seek to storm the gates of American innocence. Mere gallantry is a fretful misapplication of the ethos of the age of chivalry to a human condition that has historically matured into a different historical individuality. A European

such as Prince Amerigo, on the contrary, responds eventually to the chances of total refinement and achieves a symbolic redemption of his culture by discovering the values of American morals. If Lambert Strether, the American, discovers Europe, Prince Amerigo discovers America, and the passage of Western culture into new truths and new experiences becomes symbolically completed. The cultural dialogue between the (Old and New Worlds is resolved by Henry James in his dramatic treatment of the attributes of refinement in a cross-cultural context.